

II. REMARKS

- 1. Election/Restriction.** The examiner incorrectly states that application elected claims 13-14 in the reply filed on 11/6/07. Actually, claims 1-23 were elected and claims 24-81 were withdrawn.
- 2. Claim Rejections--35 USC § 102.** The examiner rejected claims 1-23 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Chitty US 6,494,262.

Regarding claim 1, the examiner states that Chitty discloses “a method for cleaning a well with inert nitrogen gas comprising producing the nitrogen by non-cryogenic separation.”

Applicant explained the difference between the prior art and the claimed invention in the background of the specification. Indeed, applicant discussed Chitty specifically in paragraph [0012]. Applicant submits that the claims set forth an oxygenation process which is distinguishable over Chitty. Applicant’s process is not a membrane system. Nor is applicant’s system a pressure swing adsorption system as disclosed in Chitty (col. 1:15). Applicant respectfully requests that the examiner explain in detail how each element of applicant’s claims read on Chitty. Applicant believes that had the examiner done so, the examiner would have been unable to do so as the elements describe an oxygenation process distinctly different from Chitty.

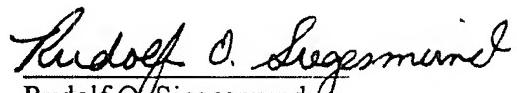
Regarding claims 2-23, the examiner stated that Chitty discloses the cleaning of wells, and the purification of nitrogen through use of a membrane system, which would at least suggest separation of nitrogen, oxygen, and other non-nitrogen components of air. Applicant notes that the examiner did not address claims 2-23 individually. Applicant submits that claims 2-23 are

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distinguishable for at least the reasons set forth above. Applicant requests that the examiner set for the specific citations from Chitty for each of claims 2-23.

2. Allowance. Applicant submits that all of the claims are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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